

Balourdet String Quartet

Winner, 2021 Concert Artists Guild Competition

Angela Bae and Justin DeFilippis, Violins
Benjamin Zannoni, Viola
Russell Houston, Cello

Sunrise, Sunset

"Life flies on like an arrow, while it seems to stand still," the subtitle of Nina C. Young's Memento Mori, is inscribed on a sundial at the *Jardin des plantes* in Paris. The rising and setting sun defines our time on this earth and the meaning we search for on it, and Memento Mori ("remember that you will die") is a meditation on stepping out of time to better understand the intricacies of life itself. Haydn's "Sunrise" Quartet, an appropriate title bestowed upon this jovial piece, sets the stage for this program's own musical reflection. Debussy's Impressionist work interweaves humankind's imagination of nature and how we perceive it. Few composers interact with the nature of the autumnal in music as gracefully as Brahms, who in the A Minor Quartet reflects on the idea of a life literally "free, but lonely" – finding comfort in areas nocturnal and haunting.

String Quartet Op. 76 No. 4 "Sunrise" (1797-98) Joseph Haydn
(1732–1809)

JD 1st Violin, AB 2nd Violin

24'

String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 10 (1893) Claude Debussy
(1862–1918)

AB 1st Violin, JD 2nd Violin

28'

Intermission

Memento Mori (2013) Nina C. Young
(1984–)

JD 1st Violin, AB 2nd Violin

8'

String Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op.51 No.2 (1873) Johannes Brahms
(1833–1897)

AB 1st Violin, JD 2nd Violin

35'

Total 95'

Serenade

We are often asked how we develop unity in our voice as a quartet and one of the answers we love to give is that we sing together. Singing is humanity's key to musical expression and this program celebrates the human voice and the voice of the Balourdet Quartet. From the operatic nature of the Wolf, the tender lyricism and warmth in the Mendelssohn, and the Cavatina in Beethoven op. 130, this program showcases some of the quartet repertoire's most touching lyrical moments.

Italian Serenade (1887)

Hugo Wolf
(1860–1903)

1st Violin, 2nd Violin TBA

7'

String Quartet No. 4 in E minor, Op. 44 No. 2 (1837)

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809–1847)

JD 1st Violin, AB 2nd Violin

27'

Intermission

String Quartet No. 13 in B-flat Major, Op. 130
with Große Fuge, Op. 133 (1825–26)

**Last mvt. of 130 is replaced with Op. 133*

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

AB 1st Violin, JD 2nd Violin

50'

Total 84'

Beethoven Masterworks

In Quartet Op. 18 No. 2, Beethoven works a tongue-and-cheek, but also sincere, musical story playing within the rules he was handed down from Haydn and Mozart. Much later in Beethoven's life, he reminisces on his frustrations in studying counterpoint with Haydn, and in a response, he turns hundreds of years of musical tradition on its head, writing the most revolutionary piece of music ever in the common practice era. Beethoven's *Great Fugue* was so massive and earth-shattering that he had to replace it and write a different finale for the Quartet Op. 130. Yet, this contrastingly Classical ending, the last movement he ever wrote, is a highly appropriate summation of Beethoven's whimsical humor – so why can't listeners enjoy both endings!

String Quartet No. 2 in G Major, Op. 18 No.2 (1801)

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

JD 1st Violin, AB 2nd Violin

27'

Intermission

String Quartet No. 13 in B-flat Major, op. 130 (1826)

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

AB 1st Violin, JD 2nd Violin

45'

Große Fuge, Op. 133 (1825)

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

AB 1st Violin, JD 2nd Violin

15'

Total 87'